

to them, the committee would prefer to leave the subject. Considered only with reference to the present aspect of the affair, it might be strictly necessary to say more; and they deprecate too sincerely the asperities which usually grow out of diversities of opinion upon doctrinal points, not to be anxious to avoid them as far as it can properly be done. The more especially are they impressed with the propriety of a such a course, in reference to the present posture of our public affairs, when the hearts and minds of our citizens should be exclusively directed to the measures best calculated to preserve the happy union of these states in the spirit of affection and brotherly love in which it was established. The committee, however, are too well advised of the desire of the Legislature that their opinion should be distinctly expressed upon some points of deep interest, growing out of the assumptions of right contained in the Ordinance of South Carolina, and the commentary of the President thereon in his recent proclamation and message, to feel themselves at liberty to exercise a discretion upon the subject.

In the performance of the duty assigned them, they will submit the dictates of their best judgment, in that spirit of liberality and forbearance which, under any circumstances, it would give them pleasure to cherish, but which, under those that now exist, they consider it a sacred duty to observe.

They believe that this duty cannot be better discharged than by a frank and explicit avowal of the principles, which, in their opinion, ought to be applied to the construction of the Constitution of the United States, and to control in that respect the administration of the government established by it. They regard it the more important to do so, from the attempts which have been made to bring into discredit political principles which the people of this State have so long and so ardently cherished; and upon the maintenance of which, in all their purity, the committee firmly believe the safety of our institutions, and the future welfare of the country, mainly depend. The re-assertion of those principles at a period like the present, when there is reason to fear that they may suffer from misapprehension, or misrepresentation is, in the opinion of the committee, a matter of paramount obligation.

There is no reasonable ground to doubt, that the great body of the American people are fervently attached to the Union of the States, and sincerely desirous that the partition and limitations of power intended to be established by the